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TAGS: PGOV PREL KPKO CG RW UG

SUBJECT: KISEMPIA "EXPLAINS" DRC POSITION ON CHOD MEETING

REF: STATE 56801

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (C) Defense Attaché and PolOff met with Congolese Chief of Defense Forces Lt. Gen. Kisempia Sungilanga Lombe May 3 to discuss the April 16-18 meeting of Tripartite Plus Chiefs of Defense Forces (CHOD) meeting in Bujumbura, per reftel. Kisempia said he had indeed signed the agreement outlining various scenarios against negative forces in the DRC, contrary to earlier reports. He showed DAO and PolOff a bound copy of the document, in both French and English, with the signatures of all four participants.

¶2. (C) Kisempia said he considered the list of scenarios a "working document" requiring further study and approval by both the Minister of Defense and President Kabila. By no means, Kisempia added, did he consider the document a finalized accord. He said he provided Defense Minister Chikez Diemu a copy of the agreement along with his own assessment of it.

¶3. (C) Kisempia said he does not agree with the recommendation to conduct joint operations with neighboring countries, nor to allow neighboring armies to operate in DRC territory. (Note: Foreign Affairs Minister Mbisa Nyamwisi came out publicly against any proposal to have foreign troops in the DRC immediately following the Bujumbura meeting. End note.) Kisempia added that neither Diemu nor Kabila would support such operations. He offered no explanation why he signed a working document containing two provisions he was strongly against.

¶4. (C) Kisempia characterized the CHOD meeting as cordial and said that very good work was conducted in Bujumbura. He said he would encourage closer collaboration with neighboring countries, particularly in the realm of intelligence-sharing. Kisempia told us he has already authorized commanders in DRC border areas to contact their counterparts in neighboring countries and exchange relevant information regarding armed groups and other negative forces.

¶5. (C) Comment: It remains a mystery why Kisempia would sign and ostensibly "agree" to the CHOD meeting document if he so adamantly opposes the provisions it contains, knowing full well that Diemu and Kabila would be equally opposed. End comment.

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